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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EUR/CACEN AND DRL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: MORE THAN 750,000 VOTES NEEDED TO PASS
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

NOVEMBER 20 LIKELY DATE FOR REFERENDUM

2. (SBU) President Robert Kocharian and the members of the ruling Coalition parties have preliminarily set November 20 as the date for a referendum on the package of proposed constitutional amendments. (Note: November was the deadline set by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for this reform (Resolution 1458). End Note.) Given opposition plans to call on the public either to boycott or vote against the referendum, the GOAM and the governing coalition will need to campaign hard if the referendum is to have any chance of passing.

CEC LISTS NEARLY 2.3 MILLION VOTERS

3. (SBU) According to the Armenian Central Electoral Commission (CEC) there are at least 2,286,188 registered voters in the county. (Note: Although the CEC does not provide a total number of registered voters, they do provide numbers of registered voters for each of the 41 Territorial Electoral Commissions (TEC). The minimum total number of registered voters in Armenia, 2,286,188, was calculated by adding the number of voters from each TEC, but does not include Armenian citizens who live abroad or members of the military. End Note.) According to the CEC, 2,339,704 people voted in the 2003 presidential elections.

MORE THAN 750,000 VOTES NEEDED TO PASS

4. (SBU) Armenia's current constitution requires an exceptionally high number of votes to amend it. Article 113 of the current Constitution states that, "proposed legislation submitted to a referendum shall be considered to have been passed if it receives more than fifty percent of the votes, but not less than one third of the number of registered voters." This means that the referendum must not only receive more than 50 percent of the votes of those who come to the polls but also that at least 762,063 people must vote for the referendum. (Note: There are current efforts underway to update the voters' lists, so the current minimum number of registered voters, 2,286,188, may possibly be revised up or down, which would alter the number of votes needed to pass the referendum. End Note.)
EVANS